GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1946
ANSWERED ON:04.03.2003
DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL CITIES AND TOWNS
P.D. ELANGOVAN

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have assessed the need for the development of small cities and towns to avoid the problem of over-crowding in big cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the problems being faced in the process of development of small cities and towns;

(c) whether the Union Government have documented the problems of over-crowding in metropolitan cities and the migration of people from villages to cities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and also the population of 100 over-crowded cities and towns in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT & POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI PON RADHAKR)

(a)&(b): Yes, Sir.

The prominent problems of the small cities and towns are:-

(i) Poor urban infrastructure - Physical, economic and social;

(ii) Poor financial base of the urban local bodies as a result of low collection of tax and non-tax revenues.

(iii) Inadequate technical manpower to conceive and implement urban development schemes, etc.

In order to tackle the issues related to the above mentioned problems and to reduce the crowding of big cities, the Government felt the necessity for orderly development of small and medium towns and accordingly the Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) Scheme has been initiated in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1979-80) and is continuing till date.The main objectives of the scheme are:

(i) Improving infrastructural facilities in Small and Medium Towns;

(ii) Decentralising economic growth and development of employment opportunites.

(iii) Promoting dispersed urbanization;

(iv) Integrating spatial and social-economic planning;

(v) Improving overall financial position of local bodies in the small and medium towns.

The scheme is applicable to the towns upto 5 lakhs population as per 1991 Census.

Another Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the Infrastructural Development in five Mega Cities was initiated during 1993-94 with the main objective of providing funds for sustained investment in urban infrastructure through direct and indirect cost recovery measures. The scheme was essentially meant to take care of infrastructure development of the Mega Cities keeping in view the problems in these cities due to massive migration from rural areas and small towns all over the country.

Infrastructure assistance through IDSMT and Mega City Schemes aims at overcoming the Worst features of neglect of urban requirements, taking care of un-met needs in water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, urban transport and the development of new extensions like residential colonies and satellite towns to relieve congestion.

(c)&(d): The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.